

Tribal Attendance Pilot Project

TAPP



The Oregon Department of Education Presents:

The Tribal Attendance Pilot Project Symposium

May 24th and 25th 2017

8:00 am – 4:00 pm

Roth's Fresh Markets

1130 Wallace Road, Salem, Or



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Overview of the Tribal Attendance Pilot Project (TAPP)

In 2014 a study conducted by ECONorthwest and the Chalkboard Project, *Condition of Education for Members of Oregon's Tribes*, revealed that Oregon's tribe-enrolled students lag behind their non-Indian counterparts in reading and math proficiency. The report also illuminated that tribe-enrolled students are five times more likely than members of other student groups to attend one of the state's priority of focus schools, and that in comparison with other student groups, tribe-enrolled students reported the highest levels of chronic absenteeism. According to this report and the National Center for Children in Povertyⁱ, chronic absenteeism is understood as missing more than 10% of school days in an academic year. The 2014 study identified that Native American tribe-enrolled students are 14 percentage points more likely to be chronically absent than members of other student groups: nearly 33% of Native American tribe-enrolled students in Oregon were chronically absent, in comparison to 19% of other students in the 2011-2012 academic yearⁱⁱ.

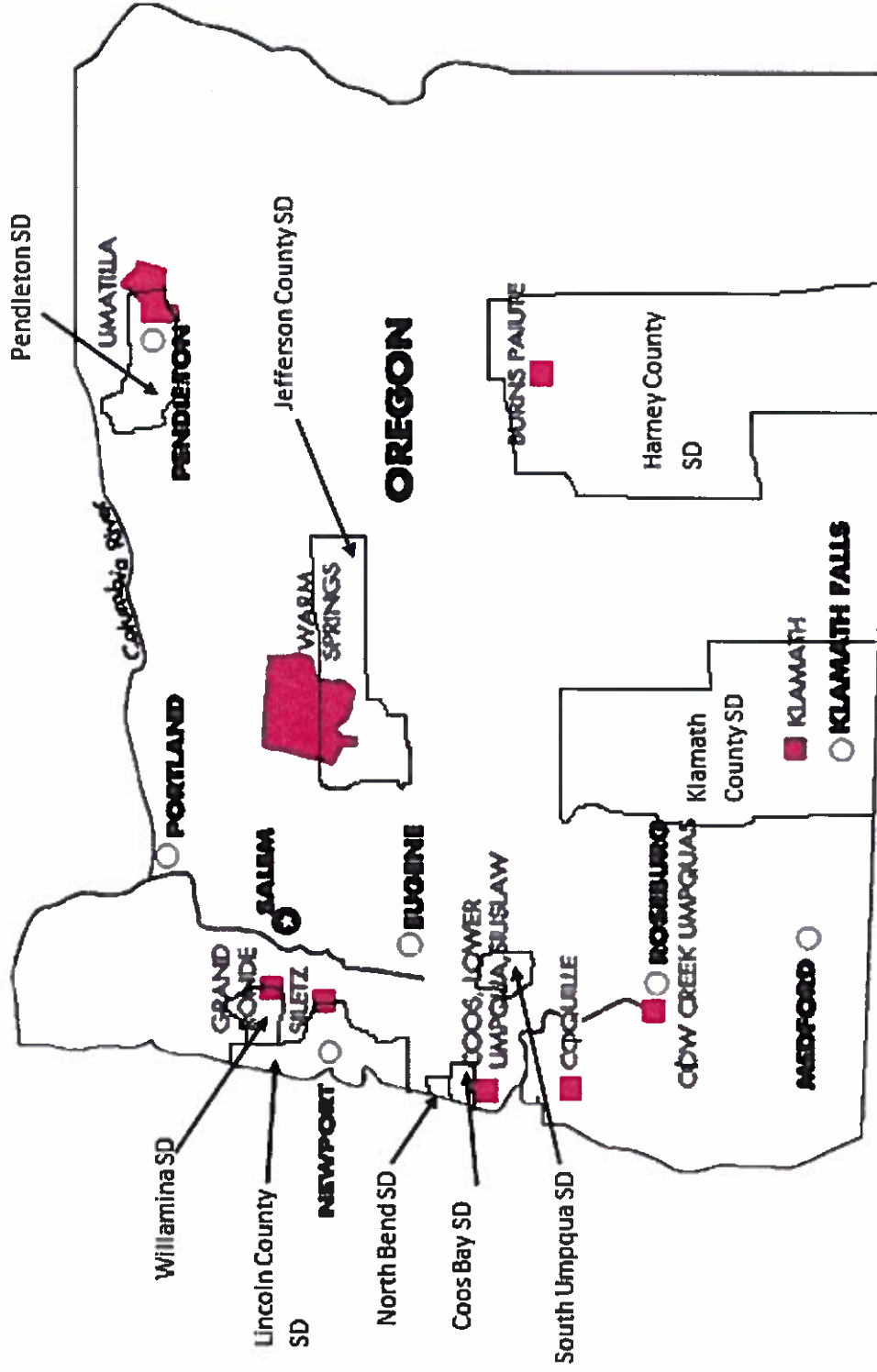
After the release of this report, Oregon's Government to Government Education Cluster, comprised of representatives from each of Oregon's nine federal recognized tribes solicited funding to reduce chronic absenteeism of American Indian/Alaska Native students. The resulting project, referred to as the Tribal Attendance Pilot Project (TAPP), would pilot strategies to improve attendance among American Indian/Alaska Native students in nine schools with high tribal member populations effected by chronic absenteeism.

TAPP "Family Advocates" provide support services to schools, students and their families. Each of Oregon's nine federally recognized tribes identified a school or district to participate in TAPP. Participating schools and districts received fiscal support to hire a family advocate with deep local connections to create school-wide initiatives to reduce chronic absenteeism. While the intent of TAPP was primarily to strengthen links between tribes and schools that serve enrolled tribal members, the school-wide nature of the initiatives has the potential to positively impact the attendance of all students attending participating schools. As part of the grant, the Oregon Department of Education provided technical support and training for the Family Advocate cohort, and monitored and reported on the effectiveness of the pilots.

This symposium highlights efforts across the state in reducing chronic absenteeism among Oregon's American Indian/Alaska Native students, and offers an opportunity to learn from TAPP sites about the successes and challenges of implementing this pilot program. We hope that this symposium will provide a starting point for creating a culture that celebrates and encourages regular school attendance in your district and schools.

The reports included in this folder represent the "raw data" of the TAPP project, provided by the Family Advocates. These reports, and the voices of those presenting today, will act as the foundation for a cumulative final report that discusses and synthesizes the lessons from implementation of TAPP, and considers the implications of TAPP for decreasing chronic absenteeism for American Indian/Alaska Native students in Oregon.

Map of TAPP Sites - School Districts and Oregon Tribes



Tribe	District	School	Project Director	Tribal Partner	Family Advocate
Burns Paiute Tribe	Harney County School District 3	Henry L. Slater Elementary	Eric Nichols	Kerrie Opie	Eric Nichols & Scott Smith
	Harney County School District 3	Hines Middle School			
	Harney County School District 3	Burns High School			
Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw	North Bend School District	Hillcrest Elementary	Bill Yester	Angela Bowen	Jason Moore
	North Bend School District	North Bay			
Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde	Willamina School District	Willamina Elementary School	Carrie Zimbrick	Leslie Riggs	Rebecca Arredondo
	Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians	Lincoln County Schools	Siletz Valley Charter School	Susan Van Lieu	Beverly Youngman
Lincoln County Schools		Toledo Elementary School			
Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation	Pendleton School District	Washington Elementary	Matt Yoshioka	Modesta Minthorn	Brent Spencer
	Jefferson County Schools 509-J	Warm Springs K-8 Academy	Ken Parshall	Deanie Smith & Ardis Smith	Tony Cortazar & Rosetta Herkshan
Cow Creek Band of the Umpqua Tribe of Indians	South Umpqua School District	Tri City Elementary	Andy Johnson	Tammie Hunt & Mark Andrews	Renaue Guenther
	South Umpqua School District	Myrtle Creek Elementary			
	South Umpqua School District	Canyonville Elementary			
Coquille Indian Tribe	Coos Bay School District	Madison Elementary	Lisa DeSalvio	Chelsea Burns & Bridget Wheeler	Breana Landrum-Gesberg
		Blossom Gulch Elementary			
Klamath Tribes	Klamath County School District	Chiloquin Elementary	Doug Jantzi	Alethea Barlowe	Felicia McNair

Definitions Related to TAPP

American Indian/Alaska Native: persons having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central American) and who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment.

Tribe:

- a) The Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Indian Reservation
- b) The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian reservation
- c) The Burns-Paiute Tribe
- d) The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians of Oregon
- e) The Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde
- f) The Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Indians
- g) The Confederated Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Tribes
- h) The Klamath Tribe
- i) The Coquille Tribe

Tribe Enrolled: an individual who is recognized as a member of a federally recognized tribal government.

Chronic Absenteeism: missing 10% or more of school days in an academic year.

Family/Community Advocate: a community-based individual hired in collaboration with the designated tribe to develop strategies and partnerships with relevant community resources to staff and implement the attendance project in the designated school district.

(Definitions are as applicable to the Tribal Attendance Pilot Project, OAR 581-018-0535.)

References

- Ginsburg, A., Jordan, P., & Chang, H. (2014). *Absences add up: How school attendance influences student success*. Attendance Works.
- Henderson, T., Hill, C., & Norton, K. (2014). *The connection between missing school and health: A review of chronic absenteeism and student health in Oregon*. Upstream Public Health.
- Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board. (n.d.). *Oregon Member Tribes Map* [Oregon Member Tribes Map]. Retrieved from http://216.243.141.9/member_tribes/oregon_member_tribes
- Tapogna, J., Dyke, A., & Rau, L. (2014). *Condition of education for members of Oregon's tribes*. ECONorthwest and the Chalkboard Project.

¹Henderson, T., Hill, C., & Norton, K. (2014). *The connection between missing school and health: A review of chronic absenteeism and student health in Oregon*. Upstream Public Health.

²Tapogna, J., Dyke, A., & Rau, L. (2014). *Condition of education for members of Oregon's tribes*. ECONorthwest and the Chalkboard Project.

Tribal Attendance Pilot Project (TAPP)

COOS BAY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Madison & Blossom Gulch Elementary K-3

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Tribal Attendance Pilot Project



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TAPP Objective

Build relationships with students and families as well as provide incentives and necessary services in a positive and proactive manner to improve attendance in collaboration with the Coquille Indian Tribe.

TAPP Action Plan

The Family Advocate will develop and document specific strategies to address factors that impact students' ability to attend school and work with families to provide solutions and develop positive relationships. The Family Advocate will ensure that all American Indian/Alaska Native students and families receive school district and community supports that improve attendance. Students participating in the TAPP program will improve attendance to an average of 90% or an increase of at least 10% per individual student. The school district and the attendance advocate will analyze attendance data and document changes that will hopefully show a significant decrease in chronic absenteeism among American Indian/Alaska Native students.

Profile of Schools

Madison Elementary:	Total Students 454	AI/AN Students 56
Blossom Gulch:	Total Students 678	AI/AN Students 46

Percent of AI/NA students attending 90% enrolled days or more

	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Madison	16/21 76%	18/36 52%	17/23 73%
Blossom Gulch	8/16 50%	7/14 50%	9/13 69%

(Data provided per student information system at school.)

Communication Plan

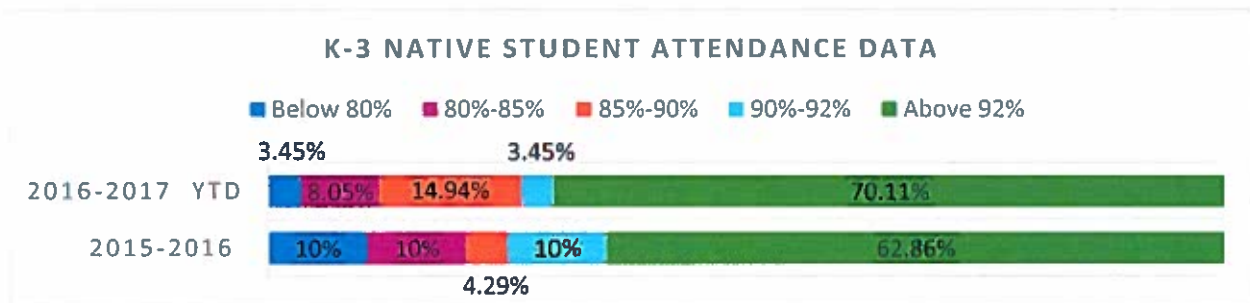
Local newspaper and radio stations, school newspapers, Class Dojo, Facebook, school events such as Back to School Night, automated calls, family nights and personalized one-on-one conversations.

TAPP Efforts

The TAPP program began the 2016-2017 academic year with an attendance awareness campaign, which included classroom discussions along with a poster contest. The advocate followed this up with monthly classroom visits along with rewards for recognition of those students who maintained positive attendance of 92% or higher. To develop a better relationship with our Native students we also held a monthly student lunch. This allowed us to get to know our Native students without them missing any class time. We have partnered with the North Bend School District TAPP to host several Family Nights with our Native families. We have also been working with our district's existing Attendance Advocate on policies and procedures and how to better strengthen the attendance program in all of our schools K-12. We will be ending the year with a school wide certificate and pool party as well as a catered awards dinner for our Native students.

TAPP Success

The biggest success is the attendance awareness now existing in our schools. When you ask a child what positive attendance is they will now tell you: "At school, Everyday and On Time!" We have also seen great success and improvement in attendance with those families who choose to participate in our program. The biggest benefit to the families is having someone there that they can count on to help and advocate for not only their child, but the family as a whole. Below is a graph to show the data of our Native students:



(Data provided per student information system at school.)

Lessons learned as Attendance Advocate

As an advocate, the biggest and most important lesson I have learned this year is that the most growth shown is on an individual basis. The more time and energy put into the relationship with a student and/or their family makes more of a difference than a broader approach. Having school wide incentives is great on getting kids excited about positive attendance and creating a positive attendance culture but does not have the same impact as personal contact with families. Another important thing I have learned this year is that it takes more than one person to make and see a change. To make a significant change it takes a team all working towards the same goal.

TAPP Barriers/Challenges

The largest challenge has been some of our parents' dismissal of the importance of school attendance. At the elementary, the responsibility of school attendance falls mainly on the parent or guardian and it is critical to educate the family as a unit. Another challenge our schools face is to help students and/or families that are in a form of crisis or survival mode and to provide supports so attendance can still be a priority.

Role Partners Played

Coos Bay and North Bend School District representatives, the Federal Program Directors from districts, elementary principals, Superintendent Representatives, Coquille Indian Tribe, and the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw (CTCLUSI) staff have and will continue to participate in multiple planning meetings. Oregon Department of Education support and direction has, and will continue to be utilized as necessary. The partners will be involved in reviewing the grant, hiring of staff for each of the partnering districts. Reviews and updates on data will occur on a monthly and/or quarterly basis once the plan has been implemented.

Sustainability Plans

Family Advocates will receive training provided by the Oregon Department of Education to improve attendance. Family Advocates will develop procedures and implement district policies in conjunction with teachers and administrators related to attendance and improved academic performance that have not been formally addressed before. These policies and practices, once in place, will hopefully become standard operating procedures for our district. Partnerships that have been built through community organizations will continue to operate. At the conclusion of the grant, we would hope to see a reduction in chronic absenteeism that would yield a reduction in personnel required to maintain the program. If continued personnel is required we would look at other funding sources.

Tribal Attendance Pilot Project (TAPP)

JEFFERSON SCHOOL DISTRICT

WARM SPRINGS K-8 ACADEMY

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Deanie Smith and Ardis
Smith

Family Advocate:

Tony Cortazar & Rosetta
Herkshan

Tribal Attendance Pilot Project



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TAPP Objective:

The objective of our TAPP program was two-fold:

1. To work with American Indian/Alaska Native students and families to create a support system and intervention plan for chronically absent students (students missing more than 10% of school days)
2. Establish and rebuild bridges with community partners to provide “wrap-around” support for our students and families

TAPP Action Plan:

- Identify “chronically absent” students (students missing more than 10% of school days)
- Reach out to families regarding attendance awareness and the importance of education, and set regular attendance goals
- Address barriers hindering regular attendance (such as a lack of transportation, safe bus routes, safe walking routes, frequent custody changes, etc.)
- After identifying barriers and setting realistic goals, cultivate and maintain communication between Family Advocates, parents and students
- Strengthening this communication was essential to maintaining attendance goals and improving where necessary
- Create a culture and awareness of regular attendance in the school
- Regularly praise and encourage students about regular attendance and the impact it has on their future
- Create an incentive plan to maintain momentum of the positive atmosphere of attendance
- Establish solid and positive relationships with the students on a daily basis
- Partner with the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon (CTWS) to create “wrap-around” support for our students
- Maintain the tribal partnerships through regular communication and keeping the common goal of supporting our students throughout the community
- Be available and present whenever possible for students, families, staff, and tribal partners
- Meet where people are: school, homes and in community

Profile of School:

Current Enrollment (as of 05/19/2017):

Total, 665 students are enrolled in Warm Springs K-8 Academy. Of those students:

- 649 or 97.6% identify as American Indian/Alaska Native
- 9 or 1/3% identify as White
- 6 or 0.9% identify as tribally affiliated Hispanic
- 1 or 0.01% identify as tribally affiliated Asian/Pacific Islander

(Data provided per Student Information System at school: Warm Springs K-8 Academy ADA/ADM report)

Graduation Rate:

The overall cohort graduation rate for the Jefferson County School District 509J in the 2015-2016 academic year showed an increase of 3.59% from the 2014-2015 academic year, with graduation rate of 60.29%.

Hispanic/Latino made an 8.03% increase, Students with Disabilities an 18.49% increase, Limited English Proficient a 19.84% increase, and Migrant had a 46.43% increase.

Superintendent Rick Molitor stated: "The area that we need to focus on is our American Indian/Alaska Native graduation rate. We are failing our Native American Students with a decrease in our graduation rate by 3.01% for a total of 38.81% students graduating on time. We have to focus our resources to not only attain our district goal, but to give hope and a positive future for our Native American students. This causes us to look differently on how we are approaching our work with Native American students."

Communication Plan:

TAPP was regularly advertised through flyer and pamphlet distribution in the school, during school events with family engagement, in the community and in meetings with tribal partners. An introduction letter described the Family Advocate roles. The local radio station conducted and aired interviews about TAPP and our school's goals. Family Advocates and tribal partners had also distributed attendance information regarding TAPP and attendance awareness (from Attendance Works) in addition to the flyers/pamphlets we made. The Warm Springs K-8 Academy has also promoted our "End of year Attendance Raffle" via email, robo-call, and texts to families. We have also observed word of mouth advertising from parent to parent/family to family about the support we have given to students and their families. Social Media has also been a successful tool in reaching our community with attendance information.

TAPP Efforts:

Through the support of TAPP we have been able to create a positive culture of attendance with the grades we have focused on (K-5). The incentive plans, college banners for perfect attendance, traveling trophy, and the regular positive relationship building with the students has created an awareness that wasn't formerly as present. The students have responded positively to the efforts being made. The staff have also greatly appreciated the Family Advocate positions and the hard work in getting students to school and offering support to the community.

TAPP Success:

- Reduced number of citations from 14 for the K-4 level last year to one this year
- Developed communication channels to reach out to the families and community (letters, radio, SMS, flyers, pamphlets)
- Achieved buy-in and support from the community
- Regular attendance became a community effort (for example, local store employees help inform us about who is skipping school; community center staff report any children seen throughout the day so that community advocates can reach out and try to keep them in school)
- Gaining trust from kids and families (for example, families felt comfortable calling Family Advocates to pick up children when they have missed the bus or for assistance with other familial situations that might prevent their children from getting to school)
- Being supported by our administrative staff
- Being able to attend the Dropout Prevention Convention
- Having the trust and freedom to make the decisions we feel are in the best interest of the families and children to achieve better attendance
- Creating an atmosphere where the students understand the importance of attendance and how it can affect their future

Lessons Learned as a Family Advocate:

- A better understanding of the importance of attendance
- Learning how to approach and communicate with ALL the different families and mindsets
- That the children do care about their future and education, but need to understand the role that regular attendance plays in reaching their goals
- To truly see changes in attendance, the school and community need to have a “wrap-around” support to connect with and support the Tribal families and their children

TAPP Barriers/Challenges:

- Keeping the address and contact numbers up to date with the school systems
- Bringing change into the school and gaining support of staff
- Educating the families of the importance of an education for their children
- Rebuilding the trust and cooperation of tribal partners and the school district
- Not having a model to follow
- Learning as we go!

Roles Partners Played:

- Community members and departments helping identify when children are not at school and contacting us
- Sharing information and resources to help support the Family Advocates
- Sharing of ideas and involving the Family Advocate in their inter-departmental meetings and objectives

Sustainability Plan:

The TAPP has provided an opportunity to implement incentive programs that motivate students. The TAPP program is sustainable with support from the tribal partners and community organizations as well as the teachers for years to come. With communication and continued partnering with our tribal organizations the attendance tracking will be easily sustainable. This will allow for early identification of students with chronic absenteeism and help develop a strategy to improve it.

Tribal Attendance Pilot Project (TAPP)

KLAMATH SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHILOQUIN ELEMENTARY

Project Director:

Doug Jantzi

Tribal Partner:

Alethea Barlowe

Family Advocate:

Felicia McNair

TAPP Objective:

1. Identify barriers to school attendance and provide supports for families to address these barriers
2. Analyze school systems and policies that support and/or hinder school attendance
3. Create a school culture that celebrates and encourages regular school attendance

TAPP Action Plan:

1. Hire a Family Advocate to engage with families and students in need of support
2. Hire a Project Supervisor to facilitate professional development and policies
3. Develop a Professional Learning Community (PLC) to meet bi-weekly and evaluate data and attendance conditions

Profile of School:

- Chiloquin Elementary: 48% American Indian/Alaska Native students enrolled
- Chiloquin High School: 43% American Indian/Alaska Native reported students, 2016 graduation rate was 62.5%

(Data provided per Student Information System at school.)

Communication Plan:

1. Local Newspaper
2. Tribe created attendance brochure
3. Flyers, letter of introduction, letters inviting families to meet with Family Advocate
4. Participate in community events and collaborations
5. Attend all school activities where families attended

TAPP Efforts:

1. Professional Development for all staff in Cultural Responsiveness, Restorative Justice, Trauma Informed Schools, Writers Workshop, etc.
2. Family events with attendance incentives included
3. Attend all Family oriented events including family conferences, community activities, provided TAPP family activities



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TAPP Success:

Last school year a struggling, chronically absent student whose daily behaviors included fighting, not doing work, arriving mid-day then leaving a couple hours later, was able to attend Konaway Nika Tillicum, a camp made possible by TAPP. The student started the 2016-2017 academic year dedicated to set a new trend. The student committed to getting himself to school, having a parent call if he was sick, and was not suspended for fighting. This student's turn around represents the amazing and transformative potential of TAPP for students in our schools. In the own students' words, "I want to go back to Konaway." TAPP has been instrumental in facilitating such turn arounds for more than one student in our school.

Our student whose attendance most drastically improved began at an 88.9% attendance rate last school year to a 98.3% attendance rate this year. This student wrote me (the Family Advocate) an email sharing the positive impact of having the knowledge of how important school attendance is. The student continued to tell me that she does not want to her siblings to experience the same, prior lack of knowledge and attendance support that she experienced. This student's story highlights the need for the TAPP program and continued implementation in our schools.

Lastly, it was uplifting and promising to see the relationships and trust built between parents and the Family Advocates. Parents began contacting Family Advocates for help in getting their children to school and supporting regular school attendance.

Lessons Learned as a Family Advocate:

1. The importance of building trust with families, even though they know me
2. How to engage families and encourage them to attend activities
3. How to identifying families' barriers or solutions to regular school attendance, listening to their concerns, and ultimately how to build the rapport that allows families to disclose their needs

TAPP Barriers/ Challenges:

1. Inadequate time to provide the professional development that was planned for staff
2. Building trust with both families and students
3. Finding convenient times to engage families and plan events that they could attend

Role Partners Played:

- The Klamath Tribal Coordinator was a full participant in the Professional Learning Community (PLC) and communication link to the Tribal Administration and community
- The Tribal Coordinator also shared information with Family Advocate and increased their awareness of events in community and/or with the Klamath Tribe
- Other partners assisted with opening communication with families

Sustainability Plan:

- Continue developing knowledge and capacity for all staff to create a culturally responsive climate in the school and classroom that welcomes and supports our Tribal students

Tribal Attendance Pilot Project (TAPP)

LINCOLN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

SILETZ VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL & TOLEDO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Tribal Attendance Pilot Project



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TAPP Objective:

We believe that student attendance is impacted by many factors. Elementary students are more dependent on their families to support them with productive school attendance behavior. Because of this we are hoping to build sustainable system that will support families, reduce barriers, help develop connections to community partners and foster an eventual independence to continue productive attendance patterns.

Through this grant, our two schools along with the district and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians have committed to partner in such a way that we will look at data together to determine if the program is working. We believe that our partnerships will need to continue to be strengthened and that we will need to include new partners as we move forward. We believe these new partners will become more evident as we begin the journey.

Lincoln County School District funded two positions to serve as Family Advocates in two of our schools with higher populations of tribal students. We envision these positions as a support to students and their families as we work together to increase attendance rates and decrease the amount of tardies.

We acknowledge that a great part of the beginning work will be to provide information to families regarding the importance of education, what impact attendance has on kids learning and progress, and what constitutes a chronic attendance pattern.

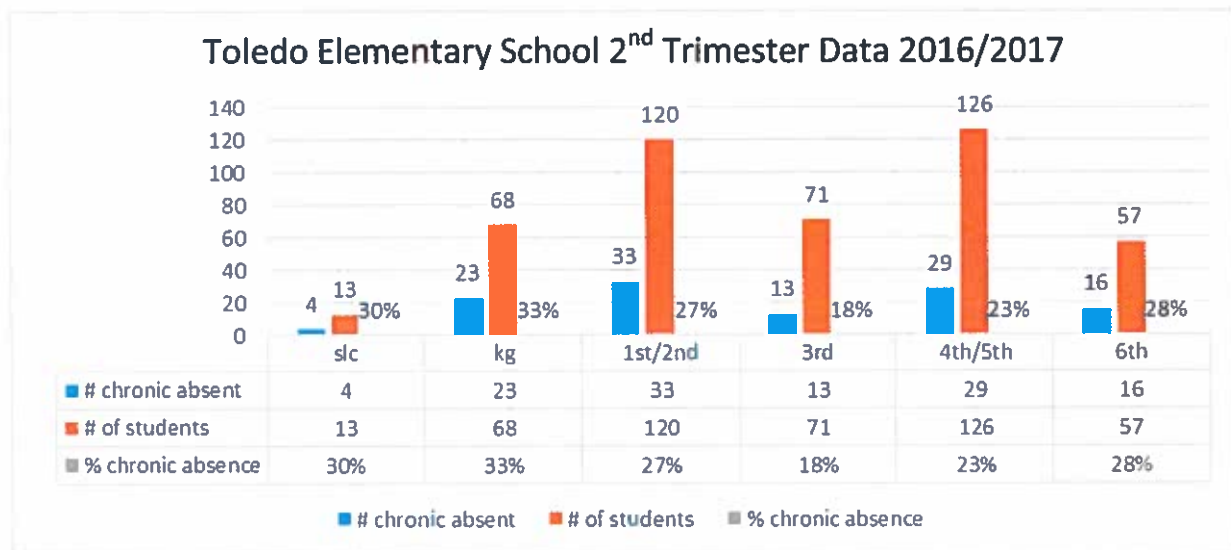
We are seeing that the impact to some students' attendance is not demonstrated purely by absentee data. Some of our students are seeing an impact to their education because of their tardiness to school. Both tardiness and chronic absenteeism impact students and their ability to progress academically because both create time away from instruction. It is our intent that the Family Advocate positions have flexible hours so that the employees can attend events that are happening after school day and have an ability to meet with kids and families at times that might be more convenient for them. The Family Advocate will need to be present at events that our families are involved in so that they have the ability to build relationship and trust which will foster their ability to come alongside and help support the

family. The Family Advocate position may also organize specific activities to bring families and students together.

TAPP Goal:

Ensure that all American Indian/Alaska Native students and families receive school, district and community supports that improve student attendance and school participation through culturally responsive activities and support programs that are designed to effectively reduce and/or eliminate chronic absenteeism, excessive tardiness and truancy of American Indian/Alaska Native students within the two identified schools.

Profile of School



(Data provided per student information system at school.)

Second trimester data was a demonstration of the effects of freezing weather conditions, Norovirus 1 and 2 and a very active flu season. Though we did not continue to grow our attendance rate, we held steady never falling below 93% for the entire school. Outreach provided many opportunities to connect with parents and engage in productive conversations about attendance. 2015-2016 of the 481 students at ToES 19 students or 25.31% were identified with chronic absenteeism patterns. 2016-2017 of the 477 students at ToES 21 students or 22.71% were identified as having chronic absenteeism patterns.

Communication Plan:

Siletz Valley Fire District supported TAPP with outreach activities and attendance highlights on the community reader board and BOSS radio provided radio broadcast supporting TAPP initiatives. Our first letters home just remind parents/guardians of what is required for students regarding attendance and explain attendance expectations. Second letter home was more direct and a letter of agreement was included; Students with less than 85% attendance received letters advising them they had been referred to truancy office.

TAPP Efforts:

- Support students with activities that build interest in school
- Outreach for families that present with chronic absences
- Work with staff to better understand history of family issues
- Celebrate attendance successes
- Encourage teachers to talk about attendance in the classrooms
- Analyze data using the school system and assess patterns
- Letters home
- Greeting students as they arrive daily.
- Personal calls home
- Meet with parents
- Supervise refocus room
- Attend parent coffees and parent nights
- Acknowledge students with good, great and improved attendance
- Staff afterschool clubs; drama and fantasy football
- Referral to community partners, mental health, i.e. wellness providers
- Support cultural events, like Native American storyteller and Native dancers
- Outreach activities
- Assist teachers with attendance reports and follow up

TAPP Success

We had a second grade student who has increased his attendance from 21 absences first quarter to one in the third quarter. His tardies have decreased from an hour late to around five minutes. Most importantly, he went from being so far behind that he was being considered to be held back and he received multiple daily refocused to going days without one. He is on track and happy. I have worked hard with this family to create a culture and safe place for him in our school. There were custody problems as well as resource issues. We provided many services incentive plans and support to his family. He is what this grant stands for.

Lessons Learned as a Family Advocate

- Normalize the school experience for each student
- Feed the children even though they have been fed
- Listen to the children even though they have been listened to
- Draw on personal experience to guide you through difficult relationship activities
- Listen to everything and everyone but save only the pertinent facts
- Being flexible might be different than what being flexible was before
- Make a personal connection with each student

TAPP Barriers/Challenges

- School cultures are very different from each other
- Challenges in developing in depth collaborative relationships with all partners
- Schools worked independently of each other on chronic attendance activities and issues
- Many minds with many strategies, for example about how to fix attendance issues
- Hiring TAPP staff
- Internal organizational structures

Role Partners Played:

- District office administrative assistant was the purchasing agent and also provided information
- School district provided training
- Sodexo Food Services provided family night food at no cost
- District provided tracking and oversight of TAPP expenditures and planning
- Siletz Valley Fire District supported TAPP with outreach activities and attendance highlights on the community reader board
- BOSS radio provided radio broadcast supporting TAPP initiatives
- JC Thriftway Markets donated food for school activities
- Mrs. Santa Claus provided gifts to students that otherwise would have none
- Toledo Elks provided Lincoln County Food Pantry food boxes
- Newport Altrusa provided money for new shoes
- 21st Century helped coordinate transportation and afterschool care
- H.E.L.P provided clothing and paid fees for sports registration

Other participating partners included:

- Health Advisory Council
- Toledo Police and Fire
- Lincoln County Sheriffs
- Title 1
- Title 6
- Lincoln County Health and Human Services
- Olalla Center

Sustainability Plan:

As the district anticipates budget cuts, there is no assumption at Toledo Elementary for funding of a Family Advocate position to carry on TAPP activities and supports. There is a plan to add some of the more successful activities to the duties of current staff. Sodexo, LCSD food service, was willing to provide food for most of the dinners and that would be sustainable. We plan to continue attendance celebrations for 2017-2018 school year. We also hope to share strategies which were instrumental in increasing student attendance at our TAPP sites.

Tribal Attendance Pilot Project (TAPP)

NORTH BEND SCHOOL DISTRICT

NORTH BAY & HILLCREST ELEMENTARY

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Tribal Attendance Pilot Project



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TAPP Objective

Our hope is to provide incentives and necessary services in a positive and proactive manner to improve attendance in collaboration with the Confederated Tribes of Coos and Lower Umpqua (CTCLUSI).

TAPP Action Plan

The Family Advocate will develop and document specific strategies to address factors that impact students' ability to attend school and work with families to provide solutions and develop positive relationships. The Family Advocate will ensure that all American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) students and families receive school, district and community supports that improve attendance. Students participating in the Tribal Attendance Pilot Project will improve attendance to an average of 90% or an increase of at least 10% percent per individual student. The school district and the attendance advocate will analyze attendance data and document changes that will hopefully show a significant decrease in chronic absenteeism among American Indian/Alaska Native students.

Profile of Schools

North Bay Elementary:	Total Students <u>494</u>	AI/AN Students <u>45</u>
Hillcrest Elementary:	Total Students <u>477</u>	AI/AN Students <u>47</u>

(Data provided per student information system at school.)

TAPP Communication Plan

Local newspaper and radio stations, Local Television News, School Newsletter, District/School/Tribal web pages, District & Tribe Facebook pages, School Fairs, Automated Calls, School Events, Family Nights and personalized one-on-one conversations.

TAPP Efforts

We began the 2016-2017 year with a school wide campaign promoting attendance. We have conducted multiple incentive programs including classroom contests, trophies and pizza drawings. We have partnered with the Coos Bay School District to put on several Family Nights with our native families. TAPP has had a significant presence at all of our schools. We will be ending the year with school wide attendance awards assemblies and a catered awards dinner for our native students.

TAPP Success

Our data has shown an improvement in attendance with a majority of our students who were chronically absent last year. The classroom contests have been very successful in creating a lot of excitement for positive attendance for the students. Our Family Nights have been a great way to build relationships and trust with many of the families that we are working with, while providing opportunities for the families to enjoy activities and meals together. We have given out a great deal of alarm clocks which have been overwhelmingly appreciated by the students who received them. They use them with pride and are excited about taking responsibility to get up and ready for school in the morning. The family visits and transportation supports have made a significant impact on individual families as well.

Lessons Learned as a Family Advocate

Looking back, one of the lessons that I learned was that the most significant changes are made on an individual basis. What works for one family may not work for another. The school wide efforts did make a positive difference for many of our students but the greatest impact is made through the personal contacts.

TAPP Barriers/Challenges

There is a lack of transportation options for students and parents and access to programs and services due to limited resources available for some families. There is a lack of alternative options for public transportation. Geographical challenges exist due to rural areas.

The most significant challenge has been some of our parents' dismissal of the importance of school attendance. At the elementary level, we recognize that the responsibility of attendance fall predominately on the parent or guardian and it is crucial to educate the whole family.

Role Partners Played

Coos Bay and North Bend School District representatives, the Federal Program Directors from both districts, elementary principals, Superintendent representatives, Coquille Indian Tribe and the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw (CTCLUSI) staff have and will continue to participate in multiple planning meetings. Oregon Department of Education support and direction has, and will continue to be utilized as necessary. The partners are committed to continue to meet on a regular basis to address the needs of tribal children and families.

Sustainability Plan

Family advocates received training provided by the Oregon Department of Education to improve attendance. The family advocates developed procedures and implemented district policies in conjunction with teachers and administrators related to attendance and improved academic performance that have not been formally addressed before. These policies and practices have become standard operating procedures for our district. Partnerships that have been built through community organizations will continue to operate.

Tribal Attendance Pilot Project (TAPP)

PENDLETON SCHOOL DISTRICT

WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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TAPP objective:

The Pendleton School District TAPP retains the focus of developing and documenting specific strategies to address factors that impact students' ability to attend school, forming relationships with tribal and district partners to create wrap-around services to support American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) students in school, and creating a system to incentivize student attendance.

TAPP Action Plan:

This project is developed entirely through the collaborative efforts of the Pendleton School District and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR). The Family Advocate will be employed by the district but will be an individual who has strong connections to the CTUIR community. The individual will be selected from a candidate list that is approved by the CTUIR Education Department. This project is one more step in the collaborative efforts to eliminate the achievement gap that exists between our American Indian/Alaska Native students and their peers in the Pendleton School District.

The Family Advocate will be based at Washington Elementary School and will work closely with our CTUIR students and their families to reduce absenteeism in this group of students. As a part of this project, the Advocate will build upon current services offered in the school district and by the tribe to establish wrap-around services to support students in school attendance.

Profile of school:

Total Enrollment: 484 students (1st – 5th Grade), 166 AI/AN students

<i>First Grade:</i>	92 Students	24 AI/AN
<i>Second Grade:</i>	99 Students	26 AI/AN
<i>Third Grade:</i>	79 Students	34 AI/AN
<i>Fourth Grade:</i>	123 Students	41 AI/AN
<i>Fifth Grade:</i>	91 Students	41 AI/AN

Communication Plan:

TAPP Article in the East Oregonian, TAPP Article in the Confederated Umatilla Journal, KCUW Radio (Umatilla Reservation Community Radio) interview to discuss TAPP, Principal Van Nice & Brent Spencer, TAPP Presentation to the Pendleton School Board, and TAPP Goals/Incentive Meeting with Pendleton School District Administration.

TAPP Efforts:

Consistent attendance monitoring has been critical in identifying students with absenteeism trends. This allowed for early intervention for students. When students have an unexcused absence, phone calls are made to check on the status of the student. When a parent/guardian cannot be reached, a home visit may be necessary for students who have been labeled “At-Risk”. These students are those who exhibit eighty-five percent attendance or less and have unexcused absences. An attendance team meets weekly and reviews student attendance. The team focuses on students with 90% attendance or less, with extra attention on students below 85% attendance.

Numerous attendance incentives are provided within Washington Elementary School. Monthly attendance awards are provided to students who achieve 95% attendance or higher for the month. “Every Day Matters” awards are provided to classrooms who achieve their attendance goals, and the class is awarded a treat. Weekly attendance competitions are held and the classroom with the highest weekly attendance percentage is awarded an attendance trophy which is housed in their classroom for the week.

Monthly “Family Nights” are held which are intended to provide families with useful information regarding attendance, collaborative support services and updates on TAPP activities. The Family Nights have been well attended and students check in frequently and ascertain about Family Night activities. The Family Nights are attended by the tribal partner and Pendleton School District staff/administration.

The TAPP has collaborated with the CTUIR Education Department Language Program to incorporate Tribal language names into Washington Elementary signage. This collaboration also includes the incorporation of Tribal names onto busses which serve the Tribal community. The goal of these two projects is to provide a better connection for Tribal students and families into the learning environment through the incorporation of the language. In addition to incorporating our language into Washington Elementary, we have worked with Mid-Columbia Bus Company in order to add new bus names in both Umatilla and Weyliitpuu (Nez Perce). These names will be registered with the State of Oregon and placed upon buses whose routes serve our tribal community.

TAPP Success:

School-wide attendance competitions have resulted in increased attendance for both AI/AN students and all students of Washington Elementary. Three large trophies were purchased and are presented each week to the classroom in each “den” with the highest attendance percentage for the previous week. The trophies are moved each Monday morning to the winning classroom. The trophies have provided students an incentive to earn the trophy as well as incentive for winning classes to retain the trophy. The attendance competition started in February. The most significant increase showed in the first grade which improved from 89% to nearly 92%.

The TAPP Family Nights have showed increases in attendance. We are seeing new families at nearly each event while most families have maintained consistent attendance. These events are highly anticipated within Washington Elementary students, who often ask the TAPP Family Advocate when the next event will be held and state they look forward to each event.

We are seeing a higher level of feedback from parents and have reduced the number of “unexcused” absences. Parents have become more likely to call the school and inform of absences.

The TAPP has also facilitated communication and understanding within our school. This has resulted in recognition of cultural activities as learning opportunities. Student absences are recognized as school events when attending tribally sponsored culturally activities and this does not adversely affect student attendance.

Lessons Learned as a Family Advocate

We are making an impact through the relationships we forge within our student body. This dawned on me when I was absent from school due to a TAPP meeting in Salem. Upon my return to school and was immediately welcomed back by several of my students, native and non-native alike. It served as a message that we are making a profound impact on ALL of our students, and they take notice when we are away.

I also received a message from a parent who finally gave into my relentless phone calls and text messages. It was not the reaction I had expected. Instead of showing frustration, the parent indicated they would be supporting their student attending school regularly and even took personal responsibility for the student’s excessive absences. The parent thanked me for not giving up. In another example, I was contacted by a parent for a ride to school for their student. This parent was previously very difficult to work with and even threatened litigation. The parent is now reaching out to the school and me to support their student’s attendance.

These are only a few examples and I am confident each family advocate can tell the same story. These are not the examples which we can measure through data, charts or graphs, *these are the immeasurable moments* where our presence through TAPP is making the biggest difference. These are the examples which indicate the impact we are making within our project sites. These examples are how we pave the way to changing the culture of our school.

TAPP Barriers/Challenges:

The primary challenge in achieving the TAPP goal of increased attendance is tied to families with multiple students with chronic absenteeism. In order to facilitate change within these families, a multi-tiered effort is necessary, which may transcend beyond the reach of Washington Elementary. In response, the TAPP Advocate, Title-VI staff and Washington Elementary staff have reached out to the Tribal partner to seek referral programs through which the families may find support. Consistent communication and information sharing, when permissible, is pertinent. Coordinated efforts have produced results within a portion of our students. Although these students may not achieve attendance targets, measureable increase has occurred in attendance and parents/guardians have increased communication with the TAPP Family Advocate, Title-VI Coordinator and Washington Elementary staff.

Role Partners Played:

Washington Elementary engages in monthly collaboration meetings with the tribal partner, which includes Yellowhawk Behavior Health and the CTUIR Department of Children & Family Services. The Pendleton School District also engages in monthly meetings with PSD Administration and the CTUIR Education Department. Cooperative activities include monthly TAPP Family Nights which are attended by Pendleton School District and CTUIR staff.

Sustainability Plan:

The TAPP has provided an opportunity to implement new incentive programs which have been showing success. These practices are easily repeatable beyond the TAPP. Collaboration with the tribal partner will continue into the future and consistent attendance monitoring will continue through the Tribe's Title-VI program. This will allow for early identification of students with chronic absenteeism. Through the establishment of monthly collaborative meetings with the Tribal partner, wrap-around services may be referred to families by both the Tribal Partner and the Pendleton School District.

Tribal Attendance Pilot Project (TAPP)

South Umpqua School District

TRI CITY, MYRTLE
CREEK &
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TAPP Objectives:

- Address barriers affecting student's chronic absenteeism
- Recognize good and improved attendance
- Engage students and families in culturally responsive education activities
- Create positive school culture for all students
- Educate Parents/Guardians about the importance of regular attendance

TAPP Action Plan:

- Monitor attendance and current data and policies
- Maintain regular communication with students and families
- Involve students in culturally responsive community engagement
- Develop good communication between schools, Cow Creek Band of the Umpqua Tribe of Indians and families

Profile of School:

South Umpqua School District: 4% of total student population identify as AI/AN

2012-2013 Graduation Rate for AI/AN: 53.55%
2012-2013 Graduation Rate for All Students: 76%

(Data provided per student information system at school.)

Communication/Advertising Plan:

- Mailed letters home to AI/AN families prior to 2016/17 school year
- Community Flyers
- Attend staff meetings
- Participate in Family STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) nights
- Participate in Tribal cultural events to network with families

TAPP Efforts:

- Provided monthly and trimester incentives for outstanding attendance
- Hosted cultural responsive events; Native NHL Alumni Speaker, Cultural Assembly
- Incorporated Tribes Native language; Takelma books into

classrooms

- Attended Tribal Summer Education Workshops and Field Trips with students to build relationships with students and families
- Developing cultural curriculum to be implemented 2017/18 school year

TAPP Success:

- Created awareness of the importance of attendance and academics
- Integrated cultural responsive activities into education
- Built on relationships with students and families
- Garnered Staff and Teacher support

Lessons Learned as a Family Advocate:

- Recognize Chronic Absenteeism will not be fixed in one year
- Realize some families are more open to assistance than others
- Prioritize students and families with crucial needs
- Be patient and responsive with students and families
- Start school year off with incentive programs set in place so students begin school with an attendance focused mindset

TAPP Barriers/ Challenges:

- Inadequate time for staff professional development
- High number of families that do not value school/education
- Families trapped in a culture of poverty

Role Partners Played:

- Project Director- Foster school relationships with Advocate, enforce attendance significance, advertise TAPP to school staff and teachers
- Tribal Liaison: Foster Tribal Government relationships with Advocate, lead curriculum development, cultivate ideas of culture integration in school system
- Behavior/Attendance Monitors: Implement and assistance in attendance programs such as weekly attendance competitions, monthly best class attendance, trimester attendance parties

Sustainability Plan:

- Purchased two year supply of Attendance "Brag Tags" for each school
- Developed Native American Studies curriculum; 4th Grade to be implemented in 2017'18
- Planned Professional Development for 4th Grade teachers regarding curriculum
- Established Native Family Engagement nights next school year
- Engage students in conversations about to have open about the significance of attendance
- Bridge gap between Native families and school system

Tribal Attendance Pilot Project (TAPP)

WILLAMINA SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Tribal Attendance Pilot Project



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TAPP Objective

TAPP will improve attendance in the American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) students K-6 at Willamina Elementary School by at least 10% in the school year 2016-17.

TAPP Action Plan

- Ensure that all American Indian/Alaska Native students and families receive school, district and community supports that improve attendance
- Ensure that the Family Advocate will participate in culturally responsive activities and provide effective support for students and families.
- Recognize good and improved attendance
- Engage students and parents
- Monitor attendance data and practice(s)
- Provide personalized early interventions and outreach
- Develop programmatic responses to barriers as needed

Profile of School

Willamina Elementary School is one of three schools in the district including a middle and high school, all of which are on one campus. The entire school district receives grant funding to provide free breakfast and lunch provided for all students. The elementary school is a kindergarten through sixth grade school with currently around 490 students. Of those, approximately 36% (175) are students who have American Indian/Alaska Native filled out on their school registration papers and/or filled out a Title VI form listing which tribe they're affiliated with. Most American Indian/Alaska Native students at the elementary school are primarily affiliated with the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. According to the Oregon Department of Education (ODE), in the 2014-2015 academic year, the American Indian/Alaska Native graduation rate for the district was 71.4%, completion rate was 88.5% and dropout rate was 2.6%.

(Data provided per student information system at school.)

Communication Plan

There were many ways families and the community were informed of TAPP throughout the year. Prior to TAPP being implemented in the school, there was an article about the program in *Smoke Signals*, The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde's newspaper. The

district superintendent also wrote about TAPP in the community newsletter, *The Bulletin*. A fall newsletter from the elementary school principal introduced TAPP and Rebecca Arredondo, the TAPP Family Advocate, to students and families.

An informational table display was set up at Before School Conferences with the Family Advocate standing by to offer information and answer questions. A similar table display was set up for Open House night. Whenever there were attendance raffles or events, flyers informed families that TAPP was the funder and similar announcements were made at the monthly Student of the Month/Attendance assemblies, which families were invited.

TAPP Efforts

TAPP efforts to improve attendance included having the Tribal Attendance Family Advocate introduce classroom incentives, e.g., class chants/high fives/certificates for 100% attendance, a bulletin board tracking attendance in each class, monthly attendance challenges, monthly attendance assemblies; personal connections with families through face-to-face interactions, phone calls, emails, and texts; and the creation of individual family plans and student incentives that were formed from the personal connections. A stronger relationship and communication between the school and the Grand Ronde tribe was also reinforced.

TAPP Success

By looking at the attendance percentages generated by the eSchoolsPLUS attendance program and comparing individual students' percentages from the 2015-16 school year to their percentages in the 2016-17 school year, we can see how attendance has changed for American Indian/Alaska Native students from the year prior to TAPP's implementation to the initial implementation year. (Some students were excluded from this data comparison because they were either not here one of the academic years, or were only here for part of either year—enrolled after November, or withdrew prior to April. All of the sixth graders from the 2015-2016 year and all the kindergarteners from the 2016-2017 year were excluded because they were not at the elementary school one of the years so didn't have data from which to make a comparison.)

As of the beginning of April 2017, 14% of American Indian/Alaska Native students at Willamina Elementary School who were enrolled in both 2015-16 and 2016-17 had 10% growth in their attendance rate. An additional 44% made some kind of positive growth, for a total of 58% of native students improving their rate of attendance this year. Sixty-six percent (66%) of American Indian/Alaska Native students had 90% or higher attendance rates. According to the Oregon Department of Education, when comparing the first two quarters of the 2015-2016 academic school year data with that of the first two quarters of 2016-2017 academic school year, there has been a 6% decrease in chronic absenteeism (chronic absenteeism = less than 90% attendance). We are hopeful that this trend will continue in a comparison of the third quarter data.

Throughout this year, the overall relationship between families and the school has improved. Parents communicated more with the Family Advocate and the office about attendance. Students who were being picked up early came to the office and tried to convince their parents not to take them home early because it would affect their attendance. Many times this convinced the parent to keep the child in school until the end of the day. Teachers also occasionally called parents down to the classrooms who were trying to pick up students early and tried, themselves, to convince parents to keep their children in school the entire day. Parents have noticed how the incentives at school (raffle prizes, event nights, etc.) have positively influenced their children into wanting to come to school more often.

Lessons Learned as a Family Advocate

Sometimes to make important, meaningful change, you have to ruffle a few feathers. Being a Family Advocate and trying to improve attendance means that sometimes you do and say things that others are not ready to hear or have a hard time accepting, but if you can continue to be consistent and compassionate, positive growth will happen.

TAPP Barriers/Challenges

The path to connecting with families could sometimes be a barrier/challenge. Phone numbers didn't always work, emails may have been sent back, letters went home with no responses, and parents may have avoided the Family Advocate and others when they saw them at school. Family financial, medical, mental health, or transportation issues have occasionally been barriers, as well as families' past personal experiences within the school.

Trying to change the culture around attendance has been a challenge. At the beginning of the year many families picked up their children early for no other reason than to go home, avoid traffic, etc. The Family Advocate worked hard to try and change that habit by sitting in the office at the end of the day, asking if parents could wait until the end of the day to pick up their children. Another change in attendance culture was around what constitutes an excused or unexcused absence/tardy. This goes for both families (being encouraged to send in doctor notes, etc.) and the office secretaries (how absences/tardies are marked in the attendance program).

Another barrier/challenge had to do with the data collection system—the attendance program. Though Oregon attendance is calculated by “seat time” and not whole days, the reports generated by the attendance programs seem to sometimes disregard tardies or early pick-ups when calculating the percent a child was in school. For example, the report may say that a child had 100% attendance for the month, but when you look at their individual record, you may find that they had three tardies and left early two times throughout the month. Finding the right report within the program for the information being sought was also a challenge.

Role Partners Played

Oregon Department of Education: Dedicated funding to the Tribal Attendance Pilot Project, provided support through Ramona Halcomb, Indian Education Specialist, and April Campbell, Advisor to Deputy State Superintendent on Indian Education, as well as a group of professionals in a variety of fields. They provided occasional Family Advocate meetings at the state to share ideas and support one another.

Willamina School District: Employed and provided an office space for the Family Advocate and provided physical materials and facilities usage.

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde (CTGR): The Family Advocate and Family Services Coordinator at the CTGR worked together on family engagement and support and increased communication between the tribe, school, and families. The CTGR also provided facilities for some family night events, and a team of people to brainstorm events with the Family Advocate.

Family Advocate: Made personal connections with families about attendance, set up positive incentives for students, worked on changing the culture of attendance within the school, tracked data, organized and led assemblies. Participated in many meetings throughout the county on behalf of the school district, e.g., attendance policy meetings with a county judge, wraparound services meetings, and homeless liaison meetings (the Family Advocate was also one of two McKinney Vento Homeless Liaisons for the district). Attended a variety of conferences throughout the year as well as the National Forum on Dropout Prevention for Native and Tribal Communities where the Family Advocate was also part of a presentation about the TAPP program.

Sustainability Plan

Improving attendance is a priority for the District k-12, we will utilize several of the strategies implemented by the TAPP Family Advocate at the 7-12 level next school year: student incentives, family incentives, and family nights. We are currently writing our measure 98 plan to include a Family Advocate at the high school level. The focus will be on improving learning opportunities by reducing absenteeism and alternatives to exclusionary discipline. We are expanding our administrative staff through the general fund budget, part of the duties of the added staff will be to focus on family engagement and improving student outcomes: attendance, course performance, and implementing programs district wide to reduce discipline that leads to exclusion from school.